



Distributed Audiovisual Approach to Knowledge Capture

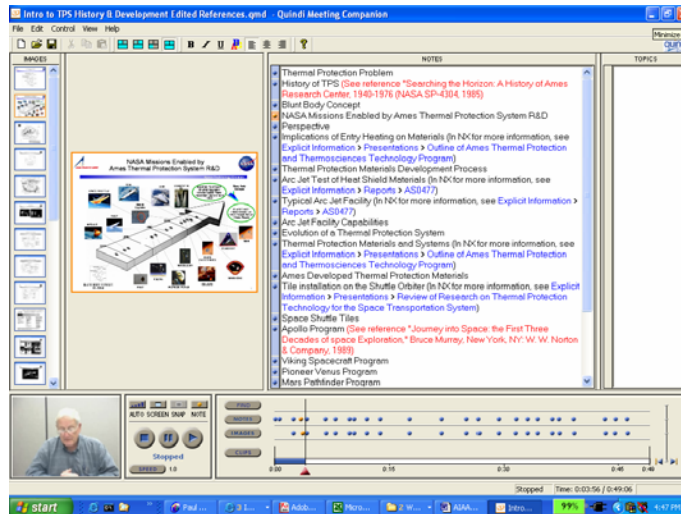
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Background. After identifying knowledge to be retained and transferred, organizations must collect this knowledge in a useful and accessible form. Some knowledge already exists in the form of documents (reports, manuals, presentations materials, etc.), and here the task consists primarily of building repositories in which the documents are organized according to the tasks and processes they support. The larger challenge, however, lies in collecting and making available the informal or *tacit* knowledge – knowledge that resides in the heads of team members. This knowledge is often of critical importance, but also anecdotal and notoriously hard to document.

Methodology. The traditional approach to harvesting tacit knowledge is based on recording oral histories and interviews with selected subject-matter experts. The recordings are then transcribed and edited, and distilled information is posted in a knowledge portal or repository. Often the distillation includes audiovisual “highlights” or “nuggets” that attach a human face to the subject matter and ease the absorption of material by the new workforce. Links to auxiliary text documents are also included if available.

Quindi has experience with this traditional style of knowledge capture, and its software has been used extensively for expert interviews of this type. However, the Quindi methodology goes significantly beyond the traditional approach in three key respects: (1) better software tools to support capture, (2) new techniques that empower workgroups to do continuous, distributed capture, and (3) the ability to leverage knowledge from routine work sessions – not just expert interviews. We review each element in turn.

First, Quindi provides a new generation of software tool that makes the creation of knowledge assets simpler and more cost-effective. The software runs in the background and records work sessions as a multimedia file, including audio, video (optionally), notes, slides, screenshots, or other visual data. The information is automatically synchronized and indexed, and the result is a web page that can be stored in a knowledge repository and easily searched and navigated. The entire process is largely automatic, and it is simple enough to be done by team members as part of their routine workflow.



**Captured sessions become a personal or team resource.
Skim, search, review highlights, add comments.**

The second element of our methodology is empowerment of the workforce. In most organizations, critical knowledge is not restricted to a few high-profile experts. Rather, it is distributed throughout the entire organization, possessed by many people, in a wide range of contexts. The Quindi approach is to provide small teams within the organization the ability to document knowledge as close to the source as possible, i.e., as close to the people and situations in which the knowledge originates or is used.

Finally, building on the advanced software tool and the capture-enabled workforce, the Quindi approach is able to leverage not only “set-piece” interviews, but the entire range of situations where tacit knowledge is naturally expressed. These include informal walkthroughs, presentations and tutorials, as well as project life-cycle meetings, such as requirements sessions, design reviews, technical reviews, brainstorming sessions, trainings, and lessons learned. Because these sessions are happening in any case, their use as part of a knowledge retention strategy adds value, boosts retention, and lowers costs.

The result, then, is the natural accumulation of knowledge assets over an extended period, collected by the workforce at the level of individual projects and departments, with guidance, assistance, support and backup from Quindi-trained consultants or facilitators. At any point, the knowledge assets are available as web pages for on-demand search, navigation, and review.